

## Commander's Connection



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shirley Howcroft

**Col. Sam Angelella (left) greets Lt. Col. Courtney Ducharme (right), 609th Air Intelligence Squadron commander, as she and other members of 9th Air Force return from Operation Iraqi Freedom April 30.**

*"Commander's Connection" is a link between Col. Sam Angelella, 20th Fighter Wing commander, and the Shaw community.*

*Questions or concerns that can't be resolved through normal channels can be called in and recorded at 895-4611 or e-mailed to [commandersconnection@shaw.af.mil](mailto:commandersconnection@shaw.af.mil).*

*Callers should leave a name and telephone number in case questions need clarification. Comments of general interest may be published in **The Shaw Spirit**.*

**Q** I fell on the uneven concrete at the Support Center building, and I just want to make sure the area is fixed so no one else will fall and get hurt.

**A** We are happy to report the 20th Civil Engineer Squadron has repaired the area. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.

## Making good OPSEC a way of life

**By Senior Master Sgt. Denise Blecke and Master Sgt. Brian Davis**  
*20th Fighter Wing OPSEC Program Managers*

Operations Security. You've heard the term a lot in the past few months. You know the drill: Don't talk about what's going on at work, especially to a tall, dark stranger who is dressed in black and speaks with a Russian accent. Yeah, yeah, tell me about something I haven't heard about since I was in basic training years ago.

But is that really what OPSEC is about? There is more to OPSEC than that.

The regulation definition of OPSEC is *"the process of identifying critical friendly information and analyzing friendly actions related to operations, acquisition, and other activities to identify those actions that can be observed by potential adversaries and determine indicators that could be collected and synthesized to derive critical information in time to be useful to an adversary and eliminate or reduce to an acceptable level the vulnerabilities of friendly information to adversary exploitation."*

OK, but what does it mean?

In simple English, OPSEC is thinking about what we are doing or saying, then, wondering if someone who doesn't like us could hurt us if they knew about it. If they could, the next step is to wonder how we can keep them from finding out. That is OPSEC in a nutshell.

Think about this one: you happen to answer the phone in your shop and someone tells you they are a reporter for *The Item*. That person tells you they are writing an article about Shaw and asks you questions about something the base is doing. What are you going to do? Do you tell them what they want to know and make sure they spell your name right for the article? Or do you ask them to call Public Affairs so they can speak to someone who can properly help them with any releasable information?

OPSEC is not just to be used on base either. When your shop goes to a restaurant near the base for a farewell lunch for someone, I would be surprised if you all didn't end up talking shop eventually. But who is sitting at the table behind you, listening to you talk? You just told them that you wish you were going PCS with your buddy, but instead you get to work Saturday getting six planes

ready to fly out at 2 a.m. Sunday morning to Base X. Maybe none of that is classified, but did you just give them another piece of the puzzle?

To the bad guys, that is exactly what it is. From their point of view, they are collecting the pieces to a jigsaw puzzle. If they can put enough pieces together, they can fill in the blank spots and see the whole picture.

We become very complacent when things are quiet; we fall into habits and stop thinking that it could happen to us. That is when bad things happen -- things like Pearl Harbor, the *USS Cole*, the Beirut Marine barracks, Khobar Towers or 9/11.

Wait a minute, 9/11? That's right, OPSEC is not just for military members either. Our families and friends should be thinking OPSEC, too. What good does it do for all military members to be careful when our friends and neighbors can tell some of the same things we could? Back to our restaurant incident -- what if our airman talked about the weather instead, but the airman's spouse told a friend they had to cancel their Saturday plans because they had to work getting the planes ready to go ... etc.

Now, wait just a minute, it's bad enough we have to suffer this OPSEC stuff, but our families too? You bet! By the way, they already do think about it.

You use good OPSEC in your personal life all the time. When you go on vacation, you set up timers to make your lights and TV or radio go on and off so it looks like someone is at home. Maybe you ask your neighbor to move your other car around and bring in your papers and mail while you are gone.

You want to ensure a bad guy doesn't know you are gone and break into your house to steal your property while you are gone. Isn't that thinking about what you are doing, wondering if someone who doesn't like you could hurt you by knowing what you are doing? And you planned what to do about it. Right?

Exactly.

OPSEC is not a totally new concept, really. It's just a name for something we've been doing all along. We only need to expand our view of using the basic OPSEC principles. OPSEC is not that difficult; for some things it comes naturally. The goal of the OPSEC program is to make it "natural" all the time.



## The Shaw Spirit

### Shaw Air Force Base editorial staff

**Col. Sam Angelella**.....20th Fighter Wing commander

**Maj. Lisa Caldwell**.....Public Affairs chief

**Staff Sgt. Stacy Simon** .....Internal Information chief  
[simon.stacy@shaw.af.mil](mailto:simon.stacy@shaw.af.mil)

**Staff Sgt. Lee Watts**.....Editor  
[spirit.editor@shaw.af.mil](mailto:spirit.editor@shaw.af.mil)

**Tech. Sgt. Chuck Hinrichs**.....Staff writer  
[hinrichs.otha@shaw.af.mil](mailto:hinrichs.otha@shaw.af.mil)

**Staff Sgt. Alicia Prakash**.....Staff writer  
[alicia.prakash@shaw.af.mil](mailto:alicia.prakash@shaw.af.mil)

**Adriene Dicks**.....Correspondent  
[adriene.dicks@shaw.af.mil](mailto:adriene.dicks@shaw.af.mil)

Information intended for the *The Shaw Spirit* must be submitted the Thursday the week prior of intended publication. Direct e-mail correspondence to [spirit.editor@shaw.af.mil](mailto:spirit.editor@shaw.af.mil) or mail to:

*20th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office*  
517 Lance Ave., Suite 107  
Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. 29152-5041

*The Shaw Spirit* is published by the Camden Media Co., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the 20th Fighter Wing.

This civilian enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services.

Contents of *The Shaw Spirit* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by DoD, the Air Force or the Camden Media Co., of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

The 20th Fighter Wing commander and public affairs office are the determining authority as to whether a particular item will appear and its placement within the paper.

All copy submitted will be edited to conform to Air Force and local policy and style standards. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise noted.

Direct all classified advertising to Camden Media Co. at (800) 450-1437 or fax (803) 432-7609. All are run on a space-available basis.

Classified ads may be e-mailed to [skaress@ci-camden.com](mailto:skaress@ci-camden.com) or dropped off at *The Shaw Spirit* office in Bldg. 1122.



# A special thank you to military spouses

**By Gen. Don Cook**  
*Air Education and Training  
Command commander*

**RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas** — Throughout the year we celebrate and commemorate, often with great fanfare, people and events that have made our nation great. For the men and women who serve in uniform, I think such commemorations take on added meaning and significance because many of these occasions are recognition of sacrifice, patriotism and service in securing and maintaining freedom and peace for our country and its citizens.

But, one occasion that doesn't get as much fanfare as it should is Military Spouses Day, which we will celebrate today. I think you will all agree we need to change that.

Our military spouses are extraordinary people. Their personal sacrifices, contributions, volunteer efforts and Service Before Self are integral to the health and well-being of our families and our success as individuals. They play a large role in ensuring our Air Force can successfully achieve its mission.

As we all know, the life of a military family is filled with unique challenges and opportunities. Today, it is often the rule rather than the excep-

tion that both husband and wife work, while sharing the responsibilities of raising a family. Both spouses may serve in uniform, while other couples comprise a military member and a civilian spouse maintaining a career either in the home or in the commercial sector.

But no matter the specific situation, I think today the military family, and the military spouse in particular, face the daunting challenges confronting them with a special fortitude, commitment and esprit de corps unique to our military family vocation.

It is important to remember that in military families, all members serve our country in one way or another. During the often-lengthy separations indigenous to military service, the spouses remaining behind have awesome responsibilities to sustain a home and family. By default, they must frequently take on the duties of both mother and father dealing with the complex issues of daily life, and they must do it alone. The military spouse is truly the engine keeping our homes and lives on track when the military member is deployed or temporarily away.

In my personal experience, I could not have succeeded in supporting the many military missions I was called



Photo by Staff Sgt. Josef Cole

**Family members of 77th Fighter Squadron pilots await the return of their loved ones from Operation Iraqi Freedom to Shaw Tuesday. Hundreds of Team Shaw members returned during this past week.**

upon to do without the loving partnership I have with my wife, Diane. I am very proud of her service to our family, the Air Force and our nation. I applaud her for her sacrifice and commitment and the fact that she has packed us up to PCS 24 times! She is among the thousands of military spouses who make this Air Force the great organization it is, and I thank her and all our military spouses for that special commitment everyday.

Across the Air Force, we will hold a variety of events and activities to recognize the many contributions our military spouses make to the military community and the enormous impact they have on the quality of our lives. I encourage you to participate fully in celebrating their accomplishments and to thank them for all they do for us. Our spouses are special and help make our Air Force family strong. We must celebrate them.

## Survival of the fittest — don't be a Darwin Award winner

**By Lt. Col. Kirby Shineman**  
*341st Space Wing Safety Office*

**MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Mont.** — Naturalist Charles Darwin proposed a theory that only the fittest species survive and others who are unable to adapt die out.

Safety officials must often feel that mankind is traveling the road to extinction. Rules are created to protect people from themselves, though many continue to believe they are the exception to those rules.

The Darwin Awards, an international honor to "those who improve our gene pool by removing themselves from it," is one indication that people haven't caught on to the idea of "operational risk management" yet. ORM, a safety official's mantra, is simply considering the consequences of one's actions to avoid suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous misfortunes.

The following Darwin Award winners didn't practice this simple concept.

They were otherwise normal people who boldly put their brains on hold for a few moments and, as a result, won the uncoveted Darwin.

Life and limbs

A British tree trimmer sought to save time by burning old tree limbs at the base of the tree he was trimming. He built a fire and added limbs to the blaze from above — where he sat in the tree. If he had taken a few seconds to evaluate this scenario, he probably would have used common sense and broken this task down into two distinct, safe

processes: cutting the limbs and burning them away from his work area. He didn't.

Can you hear me now?

In Kansas, a man was struck and killed by a train while using his cell phone to call for help after his vehicle broke down. The train engineer spotted him standing on the tracks holding a cell phone to one ear and cupping his hand over the other to keep from being distracted by the inconsiderate noise of a train horn. With time-honored cell phone etiquette, the man remained focused on his call and became locomotive fodder.

Man's best friend

Another award winner in the Ukraine was walking his dog when a police cadet pointed out that

dogs in that area must be walked with a muzzle and a leash. The pair began to argue and the man threw a grenade at the cadet's feet. The dog saved the day for the cadet when he fetched the explosive prize and dutifully returned it to his master for the last time.

Clearly, some of these folks are not the sharpest pencils in the drawer, but many of us become candidates for Darwins in our everyday lives.

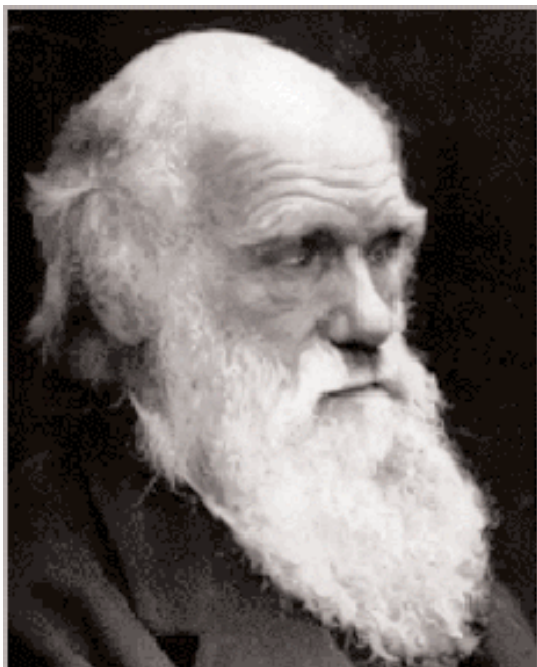
See someone walking around the base a lot? It's not a new fitness initiative. Despite hearing it weekly, there are some folks who still insist on driving home after drinking at a party. Now they can't drive on base.

Do you ever let your cell phone distract you? Do you drive with only one hand on the wheel while concentrating on that once-in-a-lifetime call home to say you'll be 10 minutes late? Do you believe it's the other drivers' responsibility to watch out for you?

Motorcycles can be a lot of fun when driven safely, but do you prefer to ride without a helmet to feel the wind in your hair? Helmets are required by Department of Defense directives to protect what's left of your brains.

Do you intentionally cut someone off in traffic, or pull out in front of someone in a fit of anger? Do you believe they're rational people who will accept your sound judgment of their driving skills?

Protect yourself by thinking ahead. ORM is a tool that can help you look at the consequences of your actions. You alone have the power to keep yourself from being the recipient of a Darwin



Darwin